

Workgroup on Land Preservation and Transfer of Development Rights

First meeting April 16, 2009

Second meeting May 14, 2009

Next Meeting June 2009

Three goals for outcomes of land preservation and TDR programs

1. To ensure that Maryland has a strong, sustainable and viable agricultural industry.
 - a. to encourage local and state government to increase use of local foods
 - b. to increase local markets and value-added opportunities for farmers
 - c. to increase percentage of local consumption that comes from local sources
2. To ensure that Maryland protects water and other natural resources including implementation of important goals such as the Chesapeake Bay nutrient management goals and the water resources elements for local governments.
3. To ensure that these policies and programs encourage the development and redevelopment of priority funding areas.

Time frame: To have an interim report by July 1, 2009 and final report by November 2009

A number of issues were identified by the group to research and discuss as we move forward.

1. To research local and state government's agricultural, open space, recreational programs to accomplish and determine:
 - a. Progress towards meeting their goals
 - b. Impact of these programs on the three goals above.

Note: This effort should be coordinated with the indicators work group

Next step is reviewing the compilation, finding missing pieces. Then look at how it could be compared to goals:

2. Look at the funding levels of these programs and calculate the "need" – cost to preserve the number of acres to meet each county's goal vs amount of current funding and determine if:
 - a. Funding could be used more efficiently
 - Leverage dollars with installment purchases for MALPF easements
 - Cap MALPF easements at a certain % of fair market values
 - Eliminate MALPF's easement value formula
 - When agricultural land is converted to development, recapture more of the tax revenue that was lost when the land was assessed for agriculture Better recapturing of tax relief when preserved land is then developed
 - Ending using ag assessments in PFA
 - Requiring land qualifying for Ag Assessment be zoned for agriculture
 - b. There is a need for new funding and if so what sources such as:
 - Ag estate taxes
 - Carbon sequestration funding – Kelly Carnneal is researching
 - Other ideas

3. Look at Split Rate Taxation: charging more for developed land in ag zones and vacant land in development zones
 - Where is it being used?
 - What would we need to do to use it in Maryland?
 - What impact would it have?
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4. Look at the role local zoning plays to achieve these goals
5. Review current studies on Transfer and or Purchase of Development Rights. This review will include information so that:
 - Best practices ideas
 - Local governments can determine if the program might work for them
 - What options are available and who they can talk with
 - Develop a “cheat sheet” for what might work best for different Maryland situations

The workgroup will also look into annexations and new PFAs or expansion of PFAs: any increase in zoning must include TDR and not be given away